

2. (UNCHANGED) The method of claim 1 above, wherein the filler contents are pre-selected.

3. (UNCHANGED) The method of claim 1 above, wherein the filler contents are selected from a group comprising text data, graphics data, audio data, and audiovisual data.

4. (UNCHANGED) The method of claim 1 above, wherein the filler contents are selected from a group comprising static filler contents and dynamic filler contents.

5. (AMENDED) The method of claim 1 above, further comprising [ the step of ] automatically selecting the filler content based on predetermined criteria.

6. (UNCHANGED) The method of claim 5 above, wherein the filler contents are selected based on the accessed data.

7. (UNCHANGED) The method of claim 1 above, wherein the filler contents are stored on the client computer.

8. (AMENDED) The method of claim 7 above, further comprising [ the step of ] storing the filler contents in a repository on the client computer

9. (UNCHANGED) The method of claim 1 above, wherein the filler contents are stored on a server computer connected to the network.

10. (AMENDED) The method of claim 9 above, further comprising [ the step of ] retrieving the filler content from the server computer connected to the network.

11. (AMENDED) The method of claim 1 above, wherein the identifying step is performed either at the client computer or at a server computer connected to the network.

12. (AMENDED) The method of claim 1 above, wherein the presenting step further comprises [ the step of ] presenting the filler contents without interrupting the accessing of the data from the network.

13. (AMENDED) The method of claim 1 above, further comprising [ the step of ] deactivating the presenting step when the accessing of the data on the network is complete.

14. (CANCELLED) A computer program carrier readable by a computer and embodying one or more instructions that executable by the computer to perform method steps for alleviating problems associated with delays in accessing data on a network, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) accessing data on a network from a client computer;
- (b) identifying when a delay occurs during the accessing step; and
- (c) presenting filler contents on the client computer during the identified delay, wherein the filler contents are customized to a user's taste.

AMENDED

15. (UNCHANGED) An apparatus for alleviating problems associated with delays in accessing data on a network, comprising:

- (a) a client computer connected to the network;
- (b) a browser, executed by the client computer, for accessing data on the network; and
- (c) a filler engine, executed by the client computer, for presenting filler content on the client computer when a sufficient delay [ occurs ] is identified in the accessing of the data on the network, [ , ] wherein the filler contents are customized to a user's taste.

16. (UNCHANGED) The apparatus of claim 15 above, further comprising a content receiver for retrieving the filler content from a server on the network.

17. (UNCHANGED) The apparatus of claim 16 above, wherein the filler engine requests the filler contents from the content receiver and the content receiver retrieves the filler contents from a server on the network for the filler engine.

18. (UNCHANGED) The apparatus of claim 15 above, further comprising a repository, stored on the client computer, for storing the filler contents.

19. (UNCHANGED) The apparatus of claim 18 above, further comprising a content receiver for retrieving the filler content from a server on the network and for storing the retrieved filler content in the repository.

20. (UNCHANGED) The apparatus of claim 19 above, wherein the filler engine further comprises means for retrieving the filler content from the repository.

21. (UNCHANGED) The apparatus of claim 15 above, wherein the filler engine further comprises means for initiating use of the filler content when appropriate.

22. (UNCHANGED) The apparatus of claim 15 above, wherein the filler engine is an extension to the browser.

23. (UNCHANGED) The apparatus of claim 15 above, wherein the filler engine is a component separate from the browser.

24. (UNCHANGED) The apparatus of claim 15 above, wherein the filler engine displays the filler contents without interrupting the accessing of the data from the network.

25. (UNCHANGED) The apparatus of claim 15 above, wherein the filler engine deactivates when the accessing of the data from the network is complete.

26. (UNCHANGED) The apparatus of claim 15 above, wherein a server on the network transmits the delay information through the browser to the filler engine and the filler engine retrieves the filler contents from the repository in response thereto.

27. (NEW) A computer program carrier readable by a computer and embodying one or more instructions that are executable by the computer to perform method steps for alleviating problems associated with delays in accessing data on a network, the method comprising:

- a2
- (a) accessing data on a network from a client computer;
  - (b) identifying when a sufficient delay occurs during the accessing step; and
  - (c) presenting filler contents on the client computer during the identified sufficient delay, wherein the filler contents are customized to a user's taste.

28. (NEW) The computer program carrier of claim 27 above, wherein the filler contents are pre-selected.

sub C1 29. (NEW) The computer program carrier of claim 27 above, wherein the filler contents are selected from a group comprising text data, graphics data, audio data, and audiovisual data.

30. (NEW) The computer program carrier of claim 27 above, wherein the filler contents are selected from a group comprising static filler contents and dynamic filler contents.

sub-b5 31. (NEW) The computer program carrier of claim 27 above, further comprising automatically selecting the filler content based on predetermined criteria.

32. (NEW) The computer program carrier of claim 31 above, wherein the filler contents are selected based on the accessed data.

33. (NEW) The computer program carrier of claim 27 above, wherein the filler contents are stored on the client computer.

34. (NEW) The computer program carrier of claim 33 above, further comprising storing the filler contents in a repository on the client computer.

35. (NEW) The computer program carrier of claim 27 above, wherein the filler contents are stored on a server computer connected to the network.